

Title of contract/consultancy:	National consultant to conduct a formative assessment of a Cash Plus Pilot Project
Type of engagement:	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Consultant <input type="checkbox"/> Individual Contractor
Workplace of Consultancy / Location:	Belize City, Belize, Central America.
Duration:	3 months
Start Date:	April 1st, 2023
End Date:	June 30, 2023
Requesting Section:	Programme Section – Social Policy
Supervisor:	Social Policy Specialist

Fields containing an asterisk (*) will be used to advertise the consultancy

BACKGROUND (*)

General Introduction

This Terms of Reference (ToR) outlines the background, purpose and scope of a formative, learning-oriented, assessment of the Cash Plus Pilot Project for migrant children developed jointly by UNICEF, the Government of Belize (GOB), the Belize Red Cross (BRC) and DigiWallet Limited. The assessment seeks to examine the inception and implementation phases of the Cash Plus Pilot Project (August 2022-March 2023) in Stan Creek (Bella Vista and Santa Cruz) and Cayo (San Ignacio), which targeted 900 children of approximately 330 Households from migrant communities.

SECTION i. Context/ Background:

1.1. Country Context

Belize is a country of origin, destination, transit and return. According to the latest national Census (Statistical Institute of Belize-SIB, 2022), Belize counts approximately 45,000 migrants, and 14.2% of Belize's population was born abroad.¹ According to the SIB, migrants are primarily persons who are outside their country of nationality and are unable or unwilling to return to that country because of persecution or fear of persecution. The majority of migrants who settled in Belize are from the neighbouring countries. According to the migration report (SIB, 2021), 36% and 16% of immigrants in Belize were born in Guatemala and Honduras, respectively.

1.2 Social-economic, political context

Belize is confronted with high levels of poverty, and the COVID-19 added further strain on children and families, especially the most vulnerable, including migrant populations. In 2018, 60% of the children aged 0-14 years were recorded as living in monetary poverty (SIB, 2021). Further, poverty in rural areas is significant, with lower education levels of household heads, lower participation of women in the paid labour market and larger proportion of ethnic minorities. The COVID-19 has further impacted poverty and deprivations due to disruption of services, lack of access in rural areas where the vulnerable migrant populations additionally face language barriers.

1.3 Situation of girls, boys and adolescents

In spite of high levels of poverty, social protection remains low, especially for children, including the most vulnerable. In 2018, only 4% of children were covered by a social protection programme, (BOOST programme), which remains insufficient in relation to the needs of over 170,000 children². Following the

¹ However, this percentage doesn't reflect undocumented migrants who moved to Belize during the past two decades, for which statistics are not available.

² UNICEF Estimates based on population figures from Statistical Institute of Belize, 2020.

COVID-19 pandemic, the GOB implemented a temporary emergency programme, providing cash assistance to nearly 36,000 children in Belize.

Children are a particularly vulnerable group of migrant and displaced populations, and even more under irregular conditions. Migrant children face a combination of risks:

- **Financial:** migrant population are among the most vulnerable and can face additional financial barriers to access some services;
- **Geographic and Language:** access to services can be challenging in rural/ hard-to-reach areas; where populations are more difficult to reach and where there are language and isolation challenges.
- **Education:** given that schools remained closed due to COVID-19, children in migrant communities may have had limited access to distance learning and technology;
- **Child Protection:** Birth registration is one of the main challenges for migrant families and children, as well as access to key services by rural women and girls;
- **WASH:** Access to clean drinking water is challenging in many parts of Belize. Only 30% of Belize’s schools meet the standard of one toilet per 25 girls; only 33% meet the standard of 50 boys per toilet.
- **Social Protection:** Social protection coverage for children is low in Belize. Only 3.9% of the children’s population was covered by the main social protection programme BOOST prior to the COVID-19 crisis; and less than 10% of the children 0-4 years old in Belize have health.

1.4. Link with national Priorities

The Cash Plus Pilot Project builds on previous efforts initiated by the GOB and partners to address migration and support migrant children and host communities in line with the Government’s *Amnesty Programme*, which aims to offer Permanent Residence status and possible citizenship. The focus of the latest Amnesty Programme 2022-2023 includes managing migration, national security, economic development, and humanitarian assistance.

The Cash Plus Pilot Project aligns with the National Medium-Term Development Strategy (2022-2026) and contributes to the goal of poverty reduction.

Section ii. Presentation of the Cash Plus Pilot Project

2.1.The Cash Plus Pilot Project details

The Cash Plus pilot Project aims to strengthen the protection of migrant children and adolescents’ rights through leveraging key partnerships and ensuring linkages between cash assistance and access to social services. The overall Cash Plus Pilot Project has the following components:

- Develop sustainable mechanisms to strengthen cash assistance and access essential services to migrant children through a small-scale Cash Plus Project pilot for scale-up
- Support the GOB’s efforts in integrating migrant populations.

Acknowledging the lessons on cash assistance in addressing multi-dimensional phenomena, the Project is articulated around a cross sectoral and multi stakeholder approach. As such, the Project provided unconditional cash-transfer, along with access to life skill training, income generation activities and training, to address the multiple risks and vulnerabilities faced by migrant children.

Cash Plus – Concepts and Components

Definition of Cash Plus Project	Cash Plus components
‘Cash plus’ interventions combine cash transfers with one or more types of complementary support. Types of complementary support can consist of (i) components that are provided as integral elements of the cash transfer intervention, such as through the provision of additional benefit or in-kind transfers, information or behaviour change communication (BCC), or psychosocial support, and (ii) components that are external to the intervention but offer explicit linkages into services provided by other sectors, such as through direct provision of access to services, or facilitating linkages to services.	

Source: UNICEF, 2019, INNOCENTI Research, Brief: ‘Cash Plus’: Linking Cash Transfers to Services and Sectors; Roelen and al.

2.2. Key partners in the implementation of the Cash Plus Pilot Project

The initiative aims to mobilize relevant stakeholders to establish the mechanisms and structures necessary to implement Humanitarian Cash Transfers (HCT). Key partners include:

- i. **GOB** who informs and advises on national priorities;
- ii. **DigiWallet**: who provides easy and safe access to financial services via a reliable and secure network, replacing the need for bank cards and cash with an easier, safer and more secure payment method. Using the Digi Wallet App, beneficiaries have the possibility to use the cash through e-payment with the established partner shops, or cash out in BTL offices.
- iii. **BRC**, who leads coordinating the field work, as well as beneficiary monitoring. BRC works with migrant populations and provides a variety of humanitarian services, contributes to public health and social services, and supports the humanitarian-development goals of the country.

2.3. Targeting, Number of Beneficiaries and Transfer Value

Targeting: In the first stage, a geographic filter has been applied to provide assistance in particular locations where migrant and host communities are located. In the second stage, a vulnerability (multidimensional) assessment has been developed to identify the most vulnerable children.

Locations: 2 districts of Belize, Cayo and Stann Creek. Interventions are coordinated with two hubs:

- One hub managed by IOM-UNHCR where UNICEF has existing activities (Stann Creek);
- One hub managed by Belize Red Cross (Cayo).

Beneficiaries: The Project provided **cash assistance** to approximately 900 children from 330 vulnerable households with children and adolescents. In addition, the **Plus component** targeted 150 beneficiaries across the different activities offered.

Cash Component – Transfer Value: The total amount per beneficiary is estimated to BLZ 800 in four payments of BLZ 200. Total amount transferred to beneficiaries is estimated BLZ 720,000.

Targeted areas	Type of Beneficiaries	# of Beneficiaries	# of payment cycles	Amount transfer (BLZ)	Calendar	Total BLZ
Bella Vista, Stan Creek	Vulnerable migrant children/families	900 children from 330 HHs	2 payment cycles in two tranches, with a 2-week break Namely 4 disbursements	BLZ 400 per payment cycle, in two tranches of BLZ 200	Cycle 1 - Tranche 1: Dec 23, 2022 - Tranche 2 Jan 23, 23 Cycle 2 - Tranche 1: - Feb 17, 23 - Tranche 2: March 7, 23	900 children reached 4 times 900*(200*4) 720,000

Plus Component. the Cash Plus Pilot Project is expected to provide access to key services, including life-skill training, income generation activities' trainings to migrant. Based on the vulnerability assessment the list of beneficiaries was established based on needs and requests.

- Conflict Management and Psychosocial Support;
- First Aid;
- Wash In School (Participatory Hygiene and Sanitation Transformation /PHAST);
- Income Generation Activities: Barbering, Sewing, Cosmetology;
- Soap Making and Sanitary pads;
- Gardening.

Timeline:

- August-September 2022: Inception workshop and development of the vulnerability Assessment

- October-November 2022: field work/data collection and establishment of the list of beneficiaries
- December 2022: first disbursement
- January 2023: Second disbursement
- February 2023: Third disbursement
- March 2023: Fourth Disbursement

2.4. **Financial Information:** As part of the Cash Plus Pilot Project, approximately BLZ 720,000 are distributed in transfers to beneficiaries in four tranches.

2.8. Cash Plus Pilot Project monitoring system:

- **Monitoring:** UNICEF conducted periodic field missions and programmatic visits to obtain first-hand information on the situation and has held strategic discussions with local authorities.
- **Data management:** Basic bio information is requested through registration, and a database of users created to generate knowledge on the profile of beneficiaries and the use of cash.
- **Complaints and feedback mechanism:** has been established. A hotline managed by Belize Red Cross has been established through the Project.

PURPOSE (*)

Purpose of the formative Assessment. The primary purpose is:

- to foster learning and improvement from the cash transfer pilot project and to better understand the role and quality of implementation of the specific cash plus pilot project components/design features.
- to produce credible, reliable and useful evidence from the cash transfer pilot project through a formative (learning-oriented) approach: what is working, not working, how and why – with the aim to scale-up.
- to identify lessons learned and central areas of work for the design and future implementation and scale up. It is necessary to identify the lessons learned, positive and negative, that must be adopted in scaling the cash plus pilot model to a sufficient number of migrant children and families. The lessons drawn from this pilot will inform the design and implementation of the next phase.
- to inform the national process of development of the social protection strategy.

General Objective

The general objective is to assess the Cash Plus Pilot Project in meeting its objectives, as well as to establish adjustment needs and recommendations to optimize its implementation and improve its sustainability and scalability. The assessment will include both design and implementation mechanisms, (i.e., to what extent the pilot project has been implemented as intended, looking at planned vs actual results), migrant communities' satisfaction, and identify what adjustments are required moving forward.

Specific Objective

- **Gather evidence** and findings of the UNICEF Belize Cash Plus Pilot through the project implementation, looking at both the design and implementation process and the short-term results achieved with the aim of providing the necessary information for scaling up.
- Analyse the extent to which the Cash Plus pilot project has been **appropriately designed, efficiently and effectively implemented** (incl. establishment of key partnership, selection of payment mechanism, targeting and coverage, inclusion and exclusion errors, cash distribution mechanism, financial management, reporting compliance, data management, services provided, identification of risk and mitigation measures etc.) and its cost-effectiveness (e.g., analysis of administrative costs, etc.);
- Understand the **changes it produced** in the lives of migrant children at household and individual level;
- Understand how children, adolescents and families **used the money provided** ("Cash") and used the services provided ("Plus"), their satisfaction, adequacy of the transfer level, and the extent to which the spending of the money translated (or not) into benefits for children and adolescents;
- Assess the **strengths and weaknesses of the pilot; and identify opportunities and constraints** that the Cash Plus pilot has faced and key lessons/recommendations to inform the next.

- Ascertain the project **relevance and sustainability and the operational effectiveness and efficiency** of the Cash Plus pilot including design, delivery, coordination/partnership, institutional capacity, and monitoring mechanisms.

Audience and Uses

The primary users of the assessment include the GOB, UNICEF, BRC, DigiWallet, service providers, and could be extended to other UN partners and stakeholders involved in cash transfer delivery.

Potential uses of the assessment:

- Guide adjustments in the current Cash Plus Pilot Project or/promote new initiatives based on the data and results of the assessment.
- Document and share evidence-based good practices highlighted by the final assessment and recommendations to promote replication of the model to other localities in Belize.

Scope of the assessment

This section presents the assessment framework, describing the criteria to be assessed, as well as the assessment questions. Finally, the transversal approaches of the intervention are incorporated: a human rights approach (HR) and a gender perspective.

Key assessment questions include the following:

- To what extent did the selection of targeted beneficiaries succeeded in reaching the worst-off and most vulnerable migrant children and families? Were there any gaps in relation to targeting and coverage of the pilot project?
- How appropriate has the Cash Plus Pilot Project design been in terms of:
 - a. Targeting
 - b. Services
 - c. Governance structure
 - d. Monitoring and evaluation mechanisms
- To what extent was the size and frequency of the cash transfer adequate? Were the different needs of migrant children and host communities met within the objectives of the pilot project?
- How well was the delivery process managed, considering the coordination between the different stakeholders involved?
- Adequacy of the size and regularity of the cash transfer and usage of the cash by beneficiaries. To what extent and how was the cash transfer used by migrant children and adolescents? How did the cash transfer support the challenges faced by migrant children and families? Were there any unintended results?
- To what extent did the Cash Plus pilot project achieve the planned outputs and outcomes?
- How effective was the use of digital payment? Was there any bottleneck or delays in accessing the cash?
- How effective were the complementary life skill trainings and sensitization sessions from both implementers and beneficiaries perspective?
- How effective was the complaints and grievances mechanism system, especially, the helpline established for the pilot Project and beyond (Sustainability)?
- How well did the monitoring framework and other reporting mechanisms function, including the role and responsibilities of implementing partners, service providers, migration hubs?
- How can the cash transfer pilot be replicated given the current capacities? To what extent can capacity gaps and bottlenecks be overcome as part of the scale-up?
- Equity of Project design and delivery including issues of gender and human rights

The questions are expected to be further refined during the initial stage.

METHODOLOGY

The methodology described in this section is indicative and the consultant is expected to adapt and integrate the approach and propose adjustments needed to accomplish the initiative. These can include additions to the assessment design; approach; appropriate sampling strategy; data collection and analysis methods; and

an assessment framework. The proposals should also refer to methodological limitations and mitigation measures. Methodological rigor will be given significant consideration:

It is expected that the assessment will employ a ***mixed-methods approach*** drawing on key project documents and the monitoring framework for guidance. A mixed-method approach will be applied in the combining qualitative and quantitative components to ensure complementary strengths and non-overlapping weaknesses. The analysis is expected to build on information collected from variety of sources through different methods including review of administrative data, primary data collection from government representatives, stakeholders involved in the Cash Plus Pilot Project, and beneficiaries, involving service users, representatives of the target groups and members of the communities.

- The assessment considers throughout issues of equity, gender equality and human rights.
- The timing of the assessment is such that it will take mainly a formative approach, assessing its Project effectiveness and migrant children's preferences and satisfaction to date to inform the possibility of a scale-up in 2023.
- At minimum, the assessment will draw on the following methods:
 - (a) **Desk review of project documents and other relevant data;**
 - (b) **Review and analysis of secondary quantitative data;**
 - (c) **Key Informant Interviews (KIIs), with actors involved in the implementation;**
 - (d) **Focus Group Discussions (FGDs), with beneficiaries, non-beneficiaries and community member;**
 - (e) **Case studies of children and adolescents receiving cash assistance;**
- The data collected should be disaggregated by sex, age, etc. where relevant and focus on both the implementers as well as beneficiary migrant children, families and host communities.
- Data will be provided based on the survey conducted for the selected beneficiaries. Additionally, secondary data sources such as project monitoring reports will be used.

ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

- In case of carrying out interviews with children and adolescents, it is essential that the consultant refer to the UNICEF guide regarding ethical research with children; the ethical standards proposed by UNICEF in the document known as ERIC (Ethical Research Involving Children);
- The assessment must also comply with the UNICEF Procedure regarding ethical standards: ethical guidelines are to be followed during the assessment. Specific reference is made to the UNICEF's revised Evaluation Policy, and the UNICEF Procedure for Ethical Standards in Research. UNICEF Procedure for Ethical Standards in Research, Evaluation, Data Collection and Analysis, 2015: https://www.unicef.org/supply/files/ATTACHMENT_IV-UNICEF_Procedure_for_Ethical_Standards.PDF

Deliverable and Quality control

The different phases of the assessment process will give rise to the delivery of different products, among them and with a view to disseminating the results, the following stand out:

- i) An inception report (in English);
- ii) Draft Assessment Report (in English): a report of the initial assessment findings from primary data collection (in English), including a desk review analysis and a PowerPoint presentation to facilitate a stakeholder consultation exercise;
- iii) A Final Assessment report (in English) that will be revised until approved (incl. a complete first draft to be reviewed by implementing partners, UNICEF, UNICEF Regional Office);
- iv) A PowerPoint presentation (in English) to be used to share findings in dissemination events;
- v) A three-page executive summary (in English and in Spanish), intended for a broader, non-technical and non-UNICEF audience (containing main messages and results, recommendations, conclusions and lessons learned).

An outline and description of each product are indicative, and include:

- **Inception report:** The inception report will be key in confirming a common understanding of what is to be assessed, including additional insights into executing the assessment. The consultant will refine and confirm the assessment questions, confirm the scope of the assessment, further improve on the methodology proposed in the ToR, as well as develop and validate assessment instruments. The report will include, among others: i) assessment purpose and scope, confirmation of objectives and the main themes of the assessment; ii) assessment criteria and questions; iii) assessment methodology, draft data collection instruments, data analysis framework, field visit approach; iv) proposed structure of the final report; v) assessment work plan and timeline; vi) resources requirements; vii) annexes. **The inception report will be about 10 pages in length (excluding annexes).**
- **Initial assessment findings (Draft report):** This report will present the initial assessment findings from primary data collection, comprising the desk-based document review and analysis of the cash transfer pilot Project. The report developed prior to the first draft of the final report should be accompanied by a PowerPoint presentation that can be used for validation with key stakeholders.
 - i. Executive Summary (max. 5 pages)
 - ii. Context
 - iii. Purpose, Objectives and Scope of the assessment
 - IV. Assessment Questions
 - v. Methodology
 - vi. limitations
 - vii. Ethical considerations
 - viii. Findings
 - ix. Conclusions
 - x. Learned lessons
 - xi. recommendations
 - xii. Annexes:
 - Information collection tools
 - List of places visited and list of interviewees
 - Other relevant documents
- **Final Assessment report:** The report will not exceed 30 pages (excluding annexes), excluding the executive summary and annexes, along with a **PowerPoint presentation** (English);
- **An assessment briefing note, and a 3/5-page executive summary** for external users.
- Reports will be prepared according to the UNICEF Style Guide and UNICEF Brand Toolkit.
- The first draft of the final report will be received by UNICEF who will work with the consultant on necessary revisions. The consultant will consolidate all comments on a response matrix, and indicate actions taken against each comment in the production of the final draft.
- **Workshop:** to present the results.

The assessment will be supervised by the **Social Policy Specialist and Monitoring & Evaluation Officer** of UNICEF Belize. Each report delivered will be reviewed by UNICEF Belize and other relevant actors. The consultant must integrate and respond to the comments received and deliver a revised version of each report. Payment for each product will be made after the revised version of the report is approved.

TIMING

The contract will have a duration of 3 months. The table below outlines the expected timing, working days and deliverables of the Cash Plus Pilot assessment. A chronogram will be established and agreed upon.

IT System: The consultant will work with their own ICT equipment.

KEY EXPECTED RESULTS (*)

Key Activities/Responsibilities/Tasks (*)	Deliverables/Outputs (*)	Date
Desk review and drafting of the inception report	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inception report (max 10 pages) 	2 weeks after signing the contract

Pilot data collection tools developed and cleared; and field-based data collection conducted	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Initial assessment findings 	6 weeks after signing the contract
Prepare initial report and prepare presentation for validation workshop to validate data collection results	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Draft assessment report Draft Presentation 	8 weeks after signing the contract
validation workshop with key stakeholders and incorporation of comments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Final presentation 	10 weeks after signing the contract
Finalization of the assessment report, briefing note and three-page executive summary	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Assessment report (max 30 pp. excl. annexes), briefing note, 3/5-page executive summary 	12 weeks after signing The contract

This assignment will require travel outside Belize Duty Station to: **San Ignacio (Cayo) and Bella Vista/Santa Cruz (Stan Creek), and Belmopan.**

The consultant is responsible for arranging his/her own travel, including bearing the costs visas and travel insurance. Accommodation, meals and incidentals costs must not exceed the UN daily subsistence allowance rates. The costs for approved travels will be reimbursed by UNICEF Belize upon submission of receipts and based on applicable UN DSA rates. All approved travels to be conducted in accordance with UNICEF travel rules and regulations.

The consultant will prepare a financial proposal inclusive of all the consultancy costs, including fees, travel lump sum, and DSA.

MINIMUM EXPERIENCE / QUALIFICATIONS (*)	
<p>Education: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Bachelors <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Masters <input type="checkbox"/> PhD <input type="checkbox"/> Other</p> <p>Enter Disciplines:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Social Studies and Research, M&E, Public Policy and/or Administration, Social Sciences or other relevant disciplines 	<p>Knowledge/Expertise/Skills required:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> At least 3 years' progressively responsible experience in the design and implementation of similar assessments Knowledge of social protection and cash transfer programmes, Previous experience in managing research/assessments; Previous relevant experience with the United Nations, is an asset, Experience in interacting with/coordinated work between government institutions, international cooperation and civil society, Ability to write high quality technical documents Excellent spoken and written English
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Years of Experience: Minimum of three (03) years with a Master's degree, or five (05) years with a Bachelor's degree of professional work experience 	

CONDITIONS OF SERVICE (*)

Before commencing work, a consultant or individual contractor shall submit a statement of good health and take full responsibility for the accuracy of that statement, including confirmation that he or she has been informed of the inoculations required for the country or countries to which travel is authorized. Consultants and individual contractors shall assume all costs that may occur in relation to the statement of good health. Consultants and individual contractors are required to certify that they are covered by medical/health insurance.

RECOURSE (*)

UNICEF reserves the right to withhold all or a portion of payment if performance is unsatisfactory, if work/outputs is incomplete, not delivered or for failure to meet deadlines. Performance indicators against which the satisfactory conclusion of this contract will be assessed include: timeliness/quality of submission and responsiveness to UNICEF and counterpart feedback.

PROPERTY RIGHTS

UNICEF shall hold all property rights, such as copyright, patents and registered trademarks, on matter directly related to, or derived from, the work carried out through this contract with UNICEF.

TRAININGS

Consultants and Individual contractors, even those working from home, must complete the following online courses prior to signature of contract. All certificates should be presented as part of the contract.

- Ethics and Integrity at UNICEF
- Prevention of Sexual Harassment & Abuse of Authority
- Sexual Exploitation Abuse (PSEA)

Consultants and Individual Contractors must complete the following course before commencement of any travel on behalf of UNICEF.

- BSAFE Security Training

Any consultant or individual contractor who is issued a UNICEF email address must complete the following courses no later than 30 days after signature of contract.

- UN Human Rights and Responsibilities
- UNICEF Information Security Awareness Course
- Fraud Awareness

HOW TO APPLY (*)

Prospective consultants should apply through UNICEF jobs website No later than 19th March 2023.

The application package should include the following:

- A cover letter
- Detailed Curriculum Vitae
- An all-inclusive financial proposal with a detailed budget inclusive of estimated travel costs.

UNICEF is committed to diversity and inclusion within its workforce, and encourages all candidates, irrespective of gender, nationality, religious and ethnic backgrounds, including persons living with disabilities, to apply to become a part of the organization.

UNICEF has a zero-tolerance policy on conduct that is incompatible with the aims and objectives of the United Nations and UNICEF, including sexual exploitation and abuse, sexual harassment, abuse of authority and discrimination. UNICEF also adheres to strict child safeguarding principles. All selected candidates will, therefore, undergo rigorous reference and background checks, and will be expected to adhere to these standards and principles.